United Nations S/2005/230

Security Council

Distr.: General
7 April 2005

Original: English

Letter dated 6 April 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 4 April 2005, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

05-30089 (E) 130405

Annex

Letter dated 4 April 2005 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolutions 1386 (2001) and 1510 (2003), I attach a report on International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan operations covering the period from 25 January 2005 to 7 March 2005. I would appreciate you making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jaap de Hoop **Scheffer**

Enclosure

Quarterly report to the United Nations on the operations of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan

A. Introduction

1. Resolution 1510 (2003) of the United Nations Security Council requested the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to provide reports on the implementation of its mandate. This is the sixth such report by NATO and it covers the period from 25 January to 7 March 2005.

2. As of 7 March 2005, ISAF total strength was 8,374 personnel from 26 NATO nations plus 272 from 10 non-NATO nations. The steps towards full implementation of ISAF expansion, Stage 2, is witnessing a progressive but moderate rise of ISAF Forces through the build-up of new provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) and the establishment of the Herat Forward Support Base.

B. The security situation

Security in the ISAF Area of Operations

3. During the reporting period the level of violence in Afghanistan was reduced. The month of February saw the lowest levels in two years. Bad weather conditions may account for this reduction in violence to a certain extent.

4. The ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process, combined with the shortage of trained Afghan National Police (ANP) and Afghan National Army (ANA) forces, has resulted in security gaps and rising crime levels in the Afghan provinces. Although the Afghan Militia Forces are largely demobilized, irregular militias, which are reliant on illegal activities for funding, are adopting a higher profile. However, with ISAF support, the ANP is gaining more confidence to act against these criminal elements.

ISAF Operations

5. ISAF coordinated with Afghan authorities for the recovery of bodies and wreckage resulting from the Kam Air Boeing 737 crash on 3 February. ISAF has continued to support the Government of Afghanistan during the recovery and investigation phase of the crash, although poor weather has made flight conditions difficult to the point that half the scheduled air departures had to be cancelled.

6. On 2 March ISAF conducted Operation SNOW WHITE II, in which Afghan civilian patients and medical teams were airlifted from remote villages in Badakshan province to Feyzabad.

7. Two operations, SHELLY and SUKUR were conducted in the Kabul area of operations and resulted in the seizure of significant weapons caches. Operation SUKUR was led by the Afghan Ministry of Interior with ISAF support.

Support to Security Sector Reform (SSR)

8. The DDR programme remains one of the primary challenges for the Government of Afghanistan (GOA). With the presidential election successfully conducted, the GOA and the international community decided to decommission all remaining AMF units in two phases: Main Phase 3 (October 2004-March 2005) and Main Phase 4 (March-June 2005). The process to reintegrate ex-combatants will, however, be extended beyond this deadline. The number of cantoned weapons has now reached more than 7,800. Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) assess that the remainder of the material to be cantoned is composed mostly of isolated weapons that pose no real threat. As far as DDR is concerned, while approximately 32,000 men have entered the process, up to 59,000 have been taken off the payroll (de-financed) and 121 units have been decommissioned. The following points are of interest:

9. ANBP also assess that these figures could make up to 60 per cent of the real strength of the AMF units. The major concerns are in the Central area, where some units are not compliant with the process. With the completion of the DDR process, the focus will move to the issue of irregular militias. These groups are outside the payroll of the Ministry of Defence, are spread throughout the country, and may include ex-combatants from decommissioned units who did not enter the DDR process.

10. A recently created Ammunition Working Group (hopefully to become subordinated to DDR) is dealing with the huge amounts of excess ordnance. ISAF will support the DDR and Heavy Weapon Cantonment (HWC) programmes until their completion and will also support any new initiatives.

11. Although not a pillar of Security Sector Reform (SSR), Heavy Weapon Cantonment (HWC) is inextricably linked with DDR. ISAF is strongly committed to supporting the Afghanistan Ministry of Defence in this process. In Kabul, HWC has been successful with 100 per cent of declared heavy weapons cantoned by the end of December 2004. This sets the conditions for successful HWC countrywide, which is currently at 94 per cent.

C. Support to Afghan Government and to the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan

12. The ANA has made significant progress towards becoming an effective military force. In terms of recruiting, training and fielding of units, this pillar of SSR has met or even exceeded the target objectives. Although the United States has the lead for the training of the ANA, NATO/ISAF is very keen to contribute to this process and the NATO training support concept is in its final stage of preparation.

13. ISAF is contributing to ANP training in the Kabul area of operations on a case-by-case basis, making best use of the capabilities of the Kabul Multi-National Brigade. In addition to military police assets, PRTs in Konduz, Mazar-i-Sharif and Meymaneh have embedded civilian police advisers to liaise with, provide support to, and mentor local police elements. Training and other activity is coordinated through HQ ISAF with the German Police Project Office.

14. HQ ISAF has established links with the Ministry of Counter Narcotics (CN), the Counter Narcotics Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the British

Embassy (as representative of the G8 lead nation), the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Combined Forces Command Afghanistan (CFC-A) and, through the Counter Narcotics Steering Group, with the departments, agencies and organizations, both national and international, which are involved in the Afghan National Counter Narcotics Strategy.

15. The final SSR pillar, judicial reform, has made only modest progress. The GOA, with support from Italy as the lead nation, has faced challenges in extending its influence beyond Kabul in this critical pillar. Current reform efforts have been only marginally effective and greater coordination and increased involvement of the international community is urgently required. To date, the Justice Project Office has not formally requested ISAF assistance. ISAF Headquarters is nevertheless involved in the dissemination of judicial reform to the provinces. It has also been agreed that PRTs will attempt to assist the progress of reform through:

(1) Information gathering in Balkh and Konduz.

(2) Information operations by preparing the provinces for GOA training programmes.

(3) Providing indirect assistance during the training periods.

(4) Monitoring and feedback: Providing an assessment of effect after the training programme has been completed and the provision of ongoing support after the Task Force has relocated.

Kabul Afghanistan International Airport (KAIA)

16. The ISAF mission and the ability to meet NATO expansion requirements are dependent upon successful air operations. In order to continue effective management of the Air Point of Disembarkation/Embarkation (APOD) and airport, NATO has established a number of airport service contracts, which has allowed a reduction in military personnel at KAIA. This outsourcing is expected to be in place by no later than April 2005. The long-term objective for KAIA remains to transfer the airport management and operation to Afghanistan authorities. NATO is currently training Afghan fire-fighters, who are scheduled to graduate mid-2005. Air traffic controllers are currently training in India. However, a comprehensive training plan still has to be developed to enable Afghan authorities to take over KAIA airfield operations and allow ISAF to scale down its responsibility to running the APOD section.

17. A common approach of the international community with respect to KAIA's rehabilitation has been established under the term "Clearing House for KAIA". Air activity, both military and civilian, has further increased to approximately 34,000 aircraft movements per year. The instrument landing system should be certified soon. Even though some progress has been achieved, there is a critical need to improve civilian airport and military APOD capacity.

18. Although the runway surfacing project was initially delayed, the first phase of the runway surfacing was completed by the first week of December. The second and third phases, however, had to be put on hold owing to adverse weather conditions. These phases are expected to be completed by May 2005.

D. Conclusion

19. ISAF continues to fulfil its United Nations mandate to support the Government of Afghanistan in the creation of a safe and secure environment within its area of operations.

20. In addition to framework security and directed operations, ISAF continues to execute a supporting role to SSR, focused on DDR and HWC, and to other pillars within means, capabilities and constraints. Coordination between the Coalition, GOA and non-government agencies continues to improve, providing a synergy of efforts in pursuit of a secure environment and the reconstruction of Afghanistan.